

MEETING MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE
CITY OF ALAMEDA PLANNING BOARD
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2009

1. CONVENE: President Ezzy Ashcraft called the meeting to order at 7:09 p.m.
2. FLAG SALUTE: Board member Zuppan
3. ROLL CALL: PRESENT: President Ezzy Ashcraft, Board members Cunningham, Kohlstrand, and Zuppan.

 ABSENT: Vice-President Autorino, Board members Cook and Lynch.
4. MINUTES: Minutes from the meeting of August 24, 2009 (Pending)

5. AGENDA CHANGES AND DISCUSSION:

The applicant requested that item 9-A be continued to the meeting of October 12, 2009. Board member Cunningham motioned, seconded by Board Member Kohlstrand to continue the item to the October 12, 2009 Planning Board meeting. Motion passes 4-0.

6. STAFF COMMUNICATIONS:

6-A Future Agendas

Staff provided an overview of the upcoming projects.

6-B Zoning Administrator Report

No hearing was held on September 1, 2009.

7. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:

Ms. Sekhon, owner of the Seven Eleven convenience store at the corner of Lincoln Avenue and Oak Street, expressed concern with the addition of another convenience store that would introduce additional competition to existing businesses and have a negative impact on the quality of the neighborhood.

Mr. Shamar, a youth non-profit organization member, expressed concern that the establishment would sell tobacco products which would have negative consequences for the youth of the community. He urged the applicant to develop a business that would be an asset to the community.

8. CONSENT CALENDAR:

None.

9. REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS:

9-A Use Permit – PLN09-0253 – 1623 Park Street – Abdulmalik Harbi.

The applicant requests use permit approval to operate a convenience store within 300' of a residential zone district. The proposed convenience store specializes in the sale of cigarettes and tobacco products, plus it will offer snacks, beverages, gifts, novelties, candy, and printed materials such as newspapers and magazines.

The applicant requested continuance of this project to the October 12, 2009 Planning Board Meeting. Board member Cunningham motioned, seconded by Board Member Kohlstrand, to continue to the item to October 12, 2009. Approved 4-0.

9-B Municipal Code Amendment – City of Alameda A Municipal Code Amendment to amend the Alameda Municipal Codes Sections 30-36 and 30-37 related to Design Review. (Study Session).

Staff presented an overview of the proposed changes.

President Ezzy Ashcraft opened the public comment period.

Mr. Baker, Alameda resident, urged that the proposed Design Review amendments continue to serve in the capacity as gatekeeper in order to prohibit extensive alterations to historic and architecturally valuable buildings. He also encouraged the Planning Board to carefully review the proposed exemptions and recommended that an aggressive cost recovery schedule be implemented.

Mr. Rutter, Alameda resident, spoke about the need to maintain the requirement for design review for wireless antennas and solar arrays, so that such features do not negatively impact the aesthetic quality of a building or a neighborhood.

Ms. Matherson, Alameda resident, urged the board to maintain design review requirements for window replacements on buildings built after 1942.

Ms. Hurt, Alameda resident, proposed using the national standard for declaring a building 'historic' (50 years or older) instead of 1942 and pointed out the need for window design review on historic homes as windows are an important architectural feature. She stressed the need for public education and outreach on historic preservation.

Mr. Buckley, Alameda Architectural Preservation Society member, discussed the submitted letter to the Planning Board and cautioned against expanding the exemptions lists. He also provided comment on the need to update the design review guidelines, and public information handouts on things like window replacements. He wrapped up his comments by adding that the Board should carefully review the proposed notification process, consider guidance for privacy and shading impacts in the Design Guidelines, and recommended maintaining the Minor Design Review process for minor projects like as signs.

Mr. Hoy, Design Committee Chair of the West Alameda Business Association (WABA), discussed the letter WABA submitted to the Planning Board: and emphasized the need to retain a design review process for awnings, signs, and storefront modifications subject to

following the WABA Guidelines and continuing to consult with WABA.

Mr. Ratto, Executive Director of the Park Street Business Association (PSBA), spoke in favor of the storyboard requirement and would like to see that a provision be made in the design review process that would require projects within the Park Street Business district to also receive PSBA approval prior to submittal to the City. PSBA also endorses retaining the standards for projecting signs.

President Ezzy Ashcraft closed the public comment period.

Board member Cunningham endorsed the concept that the applicants carry the cost of staff time to review projects and asked for a comparison to other jurisdictions' permit fees and noted support for a public notification process that would be primarily carried out by the applicant.

President Ezzy Ashcraft endorsed a time and material charge for all projects, regardless of its scope.

Several Board members provided comment on the notification process and indicated support for notification proposal # 3 listed in the staff report. Staff was also encouraged to develop guidelines for erecting story poles and netting, which would reduce the need for extensive notification on some projects.

The Board asked staff to return with window replacement guidelines, and an updated list of exempt projects and criteria for the replacement of architectural elements and features. They also recommended that the department initiate an online permit submittal process to minimize additional demands on staff time and resources.

Board Member Zuppan suggested that online notification and posting of public hearing notices be considered and asked that staff evaluate the technological requirements and cost implications that would be involved with the online posting of these notices.

Board Member Kohlstrand requested that the design review process include the PSBA and WABA organizations, as well as other organizations that would like to be included.

Board member Cunningham asked that staff clarify which projects would be subject to design review by the Planning Board.

President Ezzy Ashcraft suggested that projects over a certain size, or in a specific zone district, such as the Park Street Business District, be automatically sent to the Planning Board for approval.

Board Member Kohlstrand requested that solar arrays and antennas not be exempt from design review, unless State law exempts them from design review consideration.

Board Member Zuppan requested that all design guidelines be written as clearly as possible and that they consider the economic impact so that Alameda can attract desirable businesses and encourage homeowners to invest in improvements.

10. WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:

None.

11. BOARD COMMUNICATIONS:

None.

12. ADJOURNMENT: **10:15 p.m.**